

CITY OF FRISCO PERSONNEL POLICIES
SECTION 5
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Section 5.1: TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Effective Date: 03/08/2006

Approved By Ordinance Number: 06-03-17

Revision Date:

5.1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The Tuition Reimbursement Program is to provide an opportunity and an incentive for employees to increase their individual level of education and expertise in their related job duties, thereby enhancing their job skills and degree of professionalism and subsequently improving the ability for staff to provide continued quality service to the community. The City makes this investment in the employee with the expectation that it will improve the employee's productivity and that the employee is committed to continued employment with the City.

5.1.2 EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY:

Participation in the Tuition Reimbursement Program is subject to availability of funds in the City's annual operating budget and prior written approval of the Department Director and Human Resources Director. Participation in the Tuition Reimbursement Program is a privilege of employment, not a right. Therefore, participation in the program is subject to approval and is not guaranteed for any employee. Only full-time employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement after successful completion of their new hire probationary period. Employees who have been placed on a Performance Improvement Plan are not eligible for tuition reimbursement until successful completion of the Performance Improvement Plan.

5.1.3 REIMBURSEMENT CATEGORIES:

This section defines the categories used in the Tuition Reimbursement Program. The employee should review this section to determine which category applies.

- College Courses for Associates, Bachelors or Masters Degree Plans
- GED
- English as a Second Language courses.

5.1.4 COURSE ELIGIBILITY:

A. The City of Frisco may provide assistance when the courses or employee's degree programs meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Relates to current job duties;

- Provides new knowledge and skills to enhance job performance and/or support the City's mission;
- Are required for a job-related degree program;
- Enhances the City's ability to respond to current and future needs; or
- Supports the documented "Employee Development Plan" sections of the employee's Performance Evaluation.

B. Individual courses outside of the degree plan, but which are directly related to the employee's present or potential position with the City, may be considered for tuition reimbursement under this plan on a case-by-case basis, with the final determination on written approval made by the Human Resources Director.

5.1.5 GUIDELINES:

- A. The City of Frisco will reimburse the employee 100% of state tuition, laboratory, and registration fees. Tuition reimbursement will only be granted for courses taken at or through an accredited university and which is part of an approved degree plan. For courses taken at a private school, the employee pays the difference in the tuition rates between the average rates for state schools within the region, as determined by the Human Resource Director, and the private school.
- B. Other fees and education expenses to which this tuition reimbursement does not apply includes, but are not limited to:
- Books
 - Courses in which no credit is assigned;
 - Courses repeated for purposes of raising a grade level;
 - Testing fees
 - Extended Payment fees;
 - Parking Fees; or
 - Returned Check fees
- C. If a course is subsidized by another source (i.e. veteran's educational payments, scholarships, and grants), tuition reimbursement is limited to those costs not covered by the other source(s).
- D. Employees enrolled in GED courses are eligible for reimbursement for 100% of the GED review course and 100% of the GED exam fee. GED review course and exam fee will only be paid once per employee.
- E. Those employees who cease employment with the City prior to completion of the course are ineligible for the tuition reimbursement benefit.
- F. If the employee does not maintain employment with the City for two years after reimbursement for the course(s), the employee will be required to repay, at the time of termination of employment, the tuition and fees that were reimbursed by the City according to the scale below. Human Resources will be responsible for tracking if any tuition reimbursement money is due upon termination of employment. Reimbursement amounts may be deducted from an employee's final paycheck with the City.

Termination within 0-6 months of course completion	Pay 100%
Termination after 6 months, prior to one year	Pay 75%
Termination after one year, prior one and one-half years	Pay 50%
Termination after one and one half years prior to 2 years	Pay 25%

- G. The time expended by the employee involved in a course approved under this plan shall not be considered as “on-duty” time. Expenses related to travel, meals, or lodging are the cost of the employee and are not considered for reimbursement under this plan.
- H. Course work usually is completed during hours of leave without pay or on the employee’s own time. However, adjustment of hours or the use of accrued compensatory time or annual leave may be arranged if the Department Director can certify that the work of the unit will not be impaired as a result.
- I. This plan is not related to courses, seminars, conferences and similar training sessions that are required, offered, or paid by the City.

5.1.5 PROCEDURES:

- A. Request for Budget Approval: Employees must submit a written estimate of their tuition reimbursement expenses to Human Resources, through their Director, in March prior to the fiscal year in which they will attend the course(s). If an employee submits for tuition reimbursement for courses that were not submitted within the March deadline, reimbursement may or may not be granted depending upon the availability of funds in the City’s annual operating budget and approval by the Department Director and Human Resources.
- B. Request for Course Approval:
1. A Tuition Reimbursement Approval Form must be completed and approved prior to registration for courses and implementation of work schedule changes.
 2. The Department Director will recommend approval or disapproval for the tuition grant. If the Department Director approves course(s) for possible reimbursement, he/she must indicate the reason the course is directly related to the duties of the employee’s position. Furthermore, if the Director recommends disapproval for the tuition reimbursement, the reason for such disapproval should also be indicated. The Department Director will then forward the form with his/her decision to the Human Resources Department and Deputy City Manager for final review.
 3. The employee will pay the initial tuition and related costs in advance and will be granted reimbursement only after the grade has been received. A grade level of “C” or better for an Undergraduate course is required for reimbursement. A grade point level of “B” or better for a Graduate course is required for reimbursement. Courses graded by “pass/fail” will be reimbursed only if the course uses the “pass/fail” as a mandatory grading requirement and a “pass” grade is received. Such reimbursement is based on the employee’s official school grade report or transcript.

- C. After completion of the course, the Tuition Reimbursement Request Form, itemized tuition and fee receipt and grade report must be submitted within 45 calendar days of completion of the course for approval of the Human Resources Director. Failure to submit the appropriate documents within the time limit indicated may result in denial or delay of the tuition reimbursement for the course.